

# UNITY

Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion.

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[NUMBER I

## UNITY.

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Subscribers and Others who receive this number of UNITY will please read and note the publishers' announcements in the first column of the last page.

## Editorial.

NON-SUBSCRIBERS receiving the present number of UNITY and continuing to receive the paper for a few weeks, will know that their names have been given us by some friend, and placed on our Ten Weeks Trial List. We shall hope for renewals of many of these subscriptions at the end of ten weeks.

A LATE number of *The Christian Life and Unitarian Herald*, has a portrait of the recently deceased Keshub Chunder Sen, minister of the Brahmo Somaj in India, with the following inscription beneath, taken from one of his letters: "Your Unitarian religion is mine, and I have a profound reverence for and allegiance to Jesus Christ, though I call not myself a Christian, much more so than many of those I find called members of the Christian church."

WE commend the article on "The Dual Brain Theory," by A. W. Gould, to our readers' careful attention. It deserves the place it holds in our columns on its own merits, aside from the fact that the motive which prompted its writing arose in the writer's dissent from an editorial paragraph in UNITY. Doubtless the editorial brain is as subject to this double action of which our contributor complains, as any other. Dr. Van Dyke's case falls under the same head as that which formed the subject of the editorial, "Moral Obligations Imposed in Changing Religious Beliefs," in our issue two weeks ago.

It would be more satisfactory if men's thoughts progressed always after strict logical processes, but the human consciousness is made up of many things besides logic,—habit, imagination, affection,—all of them conserving elements of man's being. Thus we are counseled to patience, and taught to work on long lines of faith and moral endeavor for others, while striving to choose for ourselves the strict and narrow way of plain, rational induction.

THE First Presbyterian Church of Coldwater, Mich., Rev. H. P. Collin, minister, has the following broad statement of "Our Idea and Aim" in its semi-annual circular:

"Our entire activity as a Church, Society and Congregation, and as individuals, not only on Sundays but on other days, is a religious service. We wish so far as possible to realize that idea of the New Testament, 'whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' Thus everything is to be religion with us. God in the Christ is love for man; we have fellowship with God in the Christ by having a Christlike love for man, by serving one another in love and 'doing good to all men as we have opportunity.' This is the idea of our religion, and the aim of our life."

THE *Nation* finds a resemblance to Bishop Butler in the author of "Ethical Religion," W. M. Salter, in the latter's development of his special theory of ethics, and "despite his indifference to traditional theology." The resemblance thus noted is not of style or any external quality, but in the methods, and sometimes the outcome of the writer's thought. This only shows how little outward names and traditions describe the spiritual nature within. The *Nation* is not the first who has discovered the deep religious purpose underlying the work of some men, who believe it their duty to deny themselves any religious title or calling.

MISS AMY FOWLER, the young woman whom the story of Father Damien's labors among the lepers inspired to "go and do likewise," is the daughter of an English rector, and is now on her way to the Pacific coast to set sail for the Sandwich Islands, her especial destination being Kolawao. Seven years ago she joined the Catholic church, and before leaving home she was made a member of the Order of St. Dominic, the spiritual title conferred on her being Sister Rose Gertrude. Miss Fowler is animated by both a scientific and religious motive in undertaking her new work. She will have charge of the leprosy hospital at Kolawao, and takes with her a complete set of instruments for the study and cultivation of the leper bacilli, after the methods followed in Pasteur's Parisian institute. The results of her studies will be sent to the London Leprosy Society.

THE *Christian Register* sees the deplorable fact that few of our ministers' sons become ministers. It is true of all denominations at present, we believe. There is perhaps too much uncertainty about it. Theology is a question. "Revision" is in the air. What must a man believe, or be turned out of the fellowship into which he was born? Once this was different. Then the profession has grown more arduous in the varied work required. Leisure for study is hard to get. When Mike told Patrick that for a "clane, asy job" he would like to be a bishop, he showed his ignorance. The son of a clergyman knows of sundry reactions, which lead him to "fly to evils that he knows not of." Dr. Muhlenberg of New York saw that too close contact with religious teachers and religious exercises hindered boys from wishing to be

clergymen. "Look at the English Cathedral boys. I inquired of the organist of Westminster whether some of them did not become clergymen. He never heard of such a thing." Probably most of the choir-boys who have served long leave the church for good and all. They have got all the ritual they want for a life time. Nevertheless, it is deplorable, and not fully accounted for that so few ministers' sons become ministers.

MIRACLES grew as grows the grass; they represent the devoutness of simple people, the unconscious reverence of an ignorant age. Scholars know that these bible records of elder days grew as family traditions grow, quietly, slowly and with no known or recognized standard. The stories we call the Gospels were not written as modern histories are written, with dictionaries, encyclopedias, census tables and original documents at the writer's elbow, but they grew out of the growing adoration and the widening fame of a persecuted and crucified leader. He who was rejected, while he soothed crying children, consoled mourning women, rebuked the pride of place and the pretensions of birth, inspired laggard wills and softened hard hearts, when crucified and gone, revived the power of withering trees, of raising the dead. He walked forth now with kingly power upon the waves, he was clothed upon with Messianic might. This is the road over which he rapidly passed to his place upon the throne of heaven, a part of the God-head, very God of very God.

ACORRESPONDENT of one of our daily papers has been visiting Joliet, and the account given of some of the methods of discipline there employed is heart-sickening. We wonder what impression the social student of a century hence will derive from a review of our present prison system and certain other features of modern civilization, notably the management of our county and state insane asylums, and our poor-houses. One means of discipline reported is the placing of the rebellious convict against a barred door through which the hands are thrust and handcuffed, in which position he is compelled to stand for hours, an outside door of oak being closed, leaving him in complete solitude, "lest his mind be distracted from self-communion." Corrective methods like these seem the device of cunning malevolence clothed with temporary authority. They can only harden and brutalize the entire nature of the men to whom they are applied, while the reactive effect on the keepers is almost as bad. When shall we have an Elmira Reformatory in every state, in place of that frightful blot upon our civilization, known as the State's Prison?

WE are glad to find so able an exponent of modern liberal thought as Mr. Chadwick on the side of practical church-building, that shall not discard the elements of architectural taste and beauty, but that shall provide room for the needed working features of modern church life. Mr. Chadwick professes himself very distrustful of the plea, so often heard, for a church that "speaks to the eye," finding it too often a plea for "unspiritual religion," for soft and sensuous things in place of the realities of truth and love. He tries not to be ungrateful that the little chapel where he has preached for twenty-five years is of the "regulation shape," but is compelled to recognize

that its "acoustic properties are the worse for it." He would replace it at once with something very different, could he thereby gain "some space and some convenience for parish work." There is nothing in the memorial window that is necessarily improving to a congregation's morals; and though he has never seen a church whose beauty of form and appointments need interfere with its practical use in the community, yet, "the beautiful church must ever be the least of all helps to the religious life; and the religious life that cannot dispense with it, unreservedly, is still a child, still in the go-cart stage of its development." We make these extracts from an article on Public Worship in the February number of *The Unitarian Review*.

SAYS Rev. S. C. Beach: "If Zwingle and Calvin stated their doctrine of predestination in the same words, it did not feel like the same doctrine. Every one knows that the practical effect of a doctrine depends even less upon its statement than upon the way it is held, the emphasis laid upon it, or the scheme of faith of which it makes a part." We see this illustrated in our own century. Dr. O. W. Holmes says, that led by the paths of science, "we are getting to be predestinarians as much as Edwards or Calvin was," but we have a different feeling about it from what men had when they were told that for God's good pleasure to satisfy his wrath, they were probably elected to hell from the foundation of the world. Rev. D. A. Wasson refused to believe that Jonathan Edwards was a good man, "or else he didn't know what he was talking about. The man who realizes those things and rolls them as a sweet morsel under his tongue" [see Edwards' Sermons] "and then becomes a father—that man is a scoundrel." This element of arbitrary compulsory will, this hardening of forms and phrases with determination, this bringing in of personal violence or necessity, where nature's methods are adaptive and flexible, begets bitterness and resistance. "On compulsion" manly men prefer to brave perdition, rather than confess or be converted.

## TWELVE YEARS OLD TO-DAY.

DEAR UNITY READERS:

At the beginning of this our thirteenth year, allow me to drop the thin mask of the editorial "we," and to speak in the more familiar first person singular.

UNITY has been, to me, a child of much anxiety, and, on that account, of much love. For the last ten years the final responsibility, and therefore much of the care of it has devolved upon me. That it has survived thus long is more of a surprise to those of us who are on the inside than to you who have only noticed its somewhat halting movement, halting only in a business sense, never, I trust, in its moral purpose, or spiritual intent. UNITY has been able to keep silent, but never to evade or equivocate. The purpose with which we started out has undergone no conscious change, and our earlier "Prospectuses" would answer our purpose now perhaps better than any new ones. We started out on no dreamy mission. The difficulties of the task have perhaps not been greater than we anticipated. If, as is the case, we have encountered opposition where we expected co-operation, and have found antagonists where we expected helpers, it is also true that we have found unexpected friends, and in every emergency, the help that has enabled us to continue. UNITY started



out without financial resources of any kind, except the good will of the few friends who were determined to give of themselves to this cause of breadth in religion and practical Christianity. The labor of these twelve years represents the love offerings of its contributors and editors. The defects of the paper during my ten years of administration have been so apparent that it is unnecessary to confess them, but it is my great pleasure to recognize here, with the tenderest gratitude, the forbearance, the encouragement and the love which have made the task, though imperfectly performed and at times an arduous one, a great privilege. Even its strain has been an aching joy. I think it is seldom given an editor to be bound by ties of personal acquaintance and friendship with so large a percentage of his readers as it has to me. The travel of ten years, as the missionary servant of the Western Unitarian Conference, and much journeying besides, has made it possible for me to establish lines of acquaintance which have been as delightful, and as welcome to me, as the shadow of a great rock to a sun-parched traveller. But UNITY has been sustained, thus far, by something more enduring than personal friendship. It has been working out a principle which is yet far from being triumphant. Its name and its motto have held us to the higher logic involved therein, and now, in the midst of what seems to be a strong opposition, in the house of our friends, I lay more confident hold on the future than when I helped launch the little venture twelve years ago. Each year UNITY has lived because it faced death without fear. It has been willing to die whenever business honesty demanded it. Until the last year our subscription list never quite reached the self-sustaining point, without reference to those who furnished the "copy," yet the printer has always been paid. A year ago, through your hearty co-operation, fifteen hundred names were added to our list within a period of about three months, and the business side of UNITY was secure. A few weeks ago Mr. Kerr asked you to help in a similar advance, that the services of an assistant editor might be secured, mildly intimating that my own health necessitated such relief. There is no denying the fact that I have felt the strain of over work, but I still feel "young for Liberty," and strong to work for our name and motto. The asked-for number has not yet been realized, but such hearty and generous response to our publisher's call has come from so many directions that he has felt warranted in taking that step forward for which we have waited so long.

It gives me great pleasure in introducing to you to-day an assistant editor, Mrs. Celia P. Woolley. She will give a large portion of her time to those editorial duties which have heretofore devolved upon me, or, for the truth might as well be confessed, have gone often unperformed. It is only in this capacity as assistant editor, that Mrs. Woolley needs an introduction to you. As a contributor, editorially and otherwise, she has been intimately associated with UNITY from the beginning. She comes to our aid not only with an incisive pen and a clear head, but a warm heart; and this to our UNITY family is a priceless qualification. She comes to us in this emergency because she loves the cause, and is ready and anxious to battle for it. Hereafter you will feel her touch in the various departments of this paper, and I appeal to you, the readers of UNITY, for that prompt action that will place this relationship beyond any uncertainty. My own relation to UNITY will continue the same. If relieved of duties in one direction it will be only that I may serve the cause better in others. Each week I hope to greet you in the future as in the past. You may look for me among the notes, and generally the unsigned editorials will be mine in the future as in the past.

In lifting Mrs. Woolley's name to its present position, we shall not leave a vacancy among the Editorial Contributors, and we are glad to welcome for the

first time into this list the name of Henry Doty Maxson, one whose intellectual and spiritual life has been working along these UNITY lines for many years. If we mistake not, Mr. Maxson was the active member of a radical club in Yale College when a student there some twenty years ago. His intellectual growth prevented his entering the ministry of the church of his parents, and so he entered the profession of teaching. For many years he was one of the best known professors on the Normal School staff of Wisconsin; until finally he found the place for which he was pre-destined, in an untrammelled pulpit, consecrated to freedom, fellowship and character in religion. His success at Menominee and Eau Claire, Wisconsin, is well known to our readers, and his place on the UNITY staff is already made for him. Again thanking you for your co-operation in the past, and praying for the continuation of the same, I subscribe myself as one who believes more "mightily in UNITY's name, motto and destiny" than when he penned these words ten years ago on assuming editorial charge.

Yours to continue so long as strength lasts.  
JENKIN LLOYD JONES.

#### A WORD OF RESPONSE.

In coming into a new and closer relation to UNITY, a word of thanks is due those members of the publishing committee and of the editorial staff who have extended assurances of kindly sympathy and support; and of response to the friendly greeting of the senior editor, whose arduous and devoted labors have made UNITY what it is, and whose name and work must always be most prominently identified with it. In accepting the position of assistant editor I do so with a feeling of grave but glad responsibility, believing that no work better deserves the hearty support of its followers, than the promulgation of the broad principles of religious union and fellowship for which UNITY stands. The formative period of rational religion is not yet ended; indeed, all its processes are growing ones, periods of new trial and advances of tentative outlook and endeavor. Always some new idea is to be tested, some fresh discovery to be made, some higher ideal to be attained. This must necessarily be so in a religion based on the instinct of progress, the light-seeking side of man's nature. Such a religion will in every period of its history be engaged in some kind of pioneer work. Its spirit will never cease to be aggressive, at the same time that it should grow in true constructive power and sweetness. Some new object of belief and moral effort will ever await the gaining, requiring the utmost faith and courage; work that shall discourage the timid, and provoke dissent and criticism, but along with which should go the more gracious, and quite as needful task of preserving all that is good and worthy in the systems and enterprises of the past. What the enlightened mind demands to-day is a religion based on the broadest definition, going beneath the names of all the sects, even of the larger divisions imposed in race and clime, and seeking the foundation of the human heart, which beats with as high endeavor and pure aspiration on one continent, or in one zone as another. It is to give voice to the growing sentiment of religious unity and likeness which lies underneath all lines of theological separation that UNITY exists, and hopes to secure for itself wider hearing in the future.

C. P. W.

#### UNITY AND UNITARIANISM.

One summer day in 1878, three men sat on a lumber pile in Wisconsin, trying to stimulate each other to the invention of a proper name for a Unitarian paper in Chicago. Some name expressive of the growing idea of religious unity was wanted; and some sort of "Union" had been thought of, but no satisfactory adjective to precede it. At length Mr. Jones asked: "Why not call it *Unity*?" The two others

were struck with wonder how they could have been so stupid as not to say so before—and all accepted the name as the best one possible. It expressed the deepest truth in nature; for all sciences unite to proclaim ever more clearly the unity of the universe. It expressed the highest truth in religion; for every great religion reaches toward the faith in divine unity,—in that One who fills all, and unites all, and calls all to unite with each other in peace and love. And besides this, it expressed the especial thought, and even the essential syllables of the name Unitarian; and seemed peculiarly appropriate for use in the denomination. So the name *Unity* was soon after given to the former "*Pamphlet Mission*," and the paper became still more emphatically devoted to the religion of unity. By this it meant not merely the unity of God and of nature, but much more—the practical unity of men. It assumed that this meaning was not at all opposed to Unitarianism, whatever the latter word may have originally meant. Names are expected to change their meaning from generation to generation. Just as Beecher claimed to be a Calvinist because he believed as Calvin would to-day, and said he was a Presbyterian in all except the confession of faith, and a Catholic in all except faith in the pope and the church,—so *Unity* thought it was Unitarian, even had Unitarians originally denied the unity of men. But on the contrary, the original doctrine of the unity of God had included the unity of men as its best truth, and had brought forth our paper as its natural fruit. Human unity was the best religious lesson of the divine unity, and so our paper early and often declared. With its first enlargement, March 1st, 1879, for instance, it declared that the original Unitarian "doctrine of the unity of God had lead logically and historically to the belief in the unity of all religions, and of the race." So it said: "We have long been wont in pronouncing the name, Unitarianism, to pass lightly over the *Arianism* and lay all the emphasis on the *Unité*. And now gladly dropping the *ism* and every trace of sectarian hiss, and returning to the root of the name, in which its historic meaning and real spirit lie, we proclaim our faith in *Unity*; the unity of religions in righteousness, the unity of men with each other and with nature, and the unity of all in God."

This statement was warmly welcomed,—east and west,—by Unitarians, as giving the real principle of their religion; and by others as giving the principle of all true religion. Professor Swing greeted it in the *Alliance*, and said if Unitarians "will raise the flag of unity in the sense of brotherhood," it will be "the best flag that can float over any religion." And Rev. E. E. Hale wrote that this sense of brotherhood was not only the outcome, but the origin of the Unitarian name. Quoting from an old historian, who said that the early Unitarii of Poland were so called from the union of reformed churches of all parties. Mr. Hale said that this etymology was "probably true; that [those early] Unitarians were people who believed in what you and I call unity;" and he added that Unitarians "have always said that the doctrine of the unity of God was of no account, unless men would hold to the unity of mankind."

We never had assured faith in the correctness of Mr. Hale's etymology, but welcomed his assertion that the "unity of mankind" was the most important Unitarian doctrine, and have tried to make the paper true to it. We have taught that dissension should be shunned as our fathers shunned the devil; and is, in fact, the modern name for him; that divisions are bad enough anywhere, and worse in religion; worst of all in a religion which has for two centuries carried the word unity in its name. We have taught that Unitarianism with the unity left out and division put in, would be so false a word and so foolish a thing, that Calvinism would seem more commendable.

We have taught that true Unitarianism will also look beyond itself and beyond all the names it loves, confessing its unity with all other honest and humane movements, under whatever names they may arise; and extending to them its sympathy and fellowship. In short, compressing our teaching in a sentence, we have said: "Unitarianism is the religion of unity, and welcomes all who work for unity in this quarreling world." The Unitarianism which worships One who is "over all and through all and in all," must welcome all good men, whatsoever names they may wear or use.

Not all Unitarians, however, agree to such a definition; and in their dissent from it, a large number have seceded from the Western Conference, and withdrawn their support from UNITY. But this loss does not at all lessen our faith in the principle for which the paper stands. Even if the majority should choose to give Unitarianism a narrower meaning, it would not affect our faith. The cause of religious unity has the highest thought of the day, and the laws of God on its side; and if Unitarianism does not choose to side with it, so much the worse for Unitarianism.

UNITY also seems to be proving that its idea is practical enough; and its editorial contributors range from Mr. Salter, the Ethical agnostic, to Heber Newton, who warmly praises its purpose. It seems to find people ready for it; and with all its losses, has reached three thousand subscribers. The recent gain of Mrs. Woolley as assistant editor, must increase its worth, and help to relieve the man who has given it so much of his life. Besides an amount of work in parish and elsewhere, such as few ministers ever do, Mr. Jones has edited the paper week after week, for the long term of ten years, and without a penny of compensation. Let every reader of UNITY give him the deserved thanks; and let each express the thanks by going at once and getting a new subscriber.

H. M. S.

#### Contributed and Selected.

##### THE DUAL BRAIN THEORY.

Some physiologist or other has suggested that the two halves of the human brain act independently of each other, something as the two eyes do. Usually the two hemispheres are co-ordinated and harmonious; but sometimes their action is discordant and conflicting; and just as the two eyes may reflect quite different images, so the two brains may have quite different perceptions or impulses. A recent medical work quotes the case of an English clergyman who came to his physician one day and said: "Sir, I am a miserable being. I have engaged in questionable speculations, in which I have compromised not only my own fortune, but also those of my best friends. I am overwhelmed with remorse. And yet, sir, not a word of this is true. I am a clergyman of pure morals, of irreproachable conduct. I have never speculated, and I owe no man anything." It is supposed by the experts that the two halves of this man's brain had ceased to act in harmony, and thus told conflicting stories. But when the brain is sound, the recent French doctors say, one half of it is devoted to the vegetative functions, to keeping its owner alive, while the other half does the thinking for the whole head.

Now I do not know as this theory has yet been universally accepted by science. But if it has, it would be a very convenient hypothesis on which to explain some of the puzzling phenomena displayed in religion at the present time.

Some of our divines are avowing a creed that says one thing, and at the same moment are preaching sermons that say quite another thing. If we could only assume that the brain was dual, and their creed in one half—the vegetative half, for instance—and their sermons in the other or intellectual half,



it would be a simple and charitable explanation of the whole matter.

This happy explanation was suggested to me as I read an editorial note in a recent *UNITY* commending the "deep moral conviction" of a certain Dr. Van Dyke in declaring that he did not care if his preaching did contradict his creed. I was indignant at first and much inclined to write to our beloved and overworked editor and ask him in what possible sense he used the words "moral conviction" of such a declaration.

For if the reverend doctor had solemnly declared that he believed that creed and would teach it, and, without withdrawing that declaration, is now giving the lie to that creed, surely his conduct is not what the world has been in the habit of calling "moral." To be sure we do speak of "moral" turpitude, and we also speak of the "conviction" of a person found guilty of turpitude, and possibly in this sense we might speak of the "deep moral conviction" of this clergyman. This was my first thought. But of course a little consideration showed me what our editor meant. He was glad to see any signs of a consciousness that there was something more divinely binding in the human soul than a creed, and I can sympathize with that gladness. Though I must confess that my joy would be a little more unalloyed if our venerable friend had been off with the old love before he was on with the new. But in the dual brain theory we can excuse him. We can suppose that this modern Van Dyke has a 17th century creed in one half of his brain and some of the 19th century Christianity in the other, and like the poor English clergyman his two halves have naturally gone to contradicting each other. And yet I am still a little sorry that our good brother did not imitate his English prototype by expressing a little shame for the way his better and worse halves give the lie to each other. But perhaps even this ought not to be judged immoral. The signing of a creed seems to have ceased to be a moral act in these latter days, and I suppose it would hardly do to call it an immoral act. That would hit too many unfortunates. Possibly "Un-moral" would best describe it, as it seems to have absolutely no significance whatever, moral or immoral.

I think this dual-brain theory would apply also to the young minister mentioned in your columns recently, who has been preaching liberal sermons before renouncing his illiberal creed. The two halves of his brain, like the eyes of the newly born, are not yet coordinated, as they doubtless will be in due season.

I trust the readers of *UNITY* will not think I am jesting. If I laugh at any thing so mortal as this, 'tis only that I may not weep. But even if I were jesting, there is many a true word spoken in jest, and I really do believe that it takes time for a new idea to go from one side of a man's brain to the other and expel all that is inconsistent with itself. The late Prof. Proctor gives a striking instance of this. He had already mastered and accepted the theory of evolution, he tells us, when he wrote "Other Worlds than Ours." Yet it never once occurred to him how simply and completely that new theory settles all the old speculations about the inhabitants of other worlds. I have several friends who have accepted the same theory of evolution, yet still hold fast to the old dogmas which the new theory has slain. I myself had the theory in my head several years before it finally dispatched the doctrines that had been stowed away in my brain during childhood. Therefore I feel like recommending charity to others, and so I present my pleasant theory to the readers of *UNITY* and the editor thereof. I have not copyrighted it, and I hope it will be used freely. Even if the dual brain hypothesis is doubtful, we ought to give our suffering friends the benefit of the doubt.

A. W. GOULD.

#### DEFICIENT SCHOOL TRAINING.

Mrs. Malaprop said farewell to Chicago recently, but the spirit of the illustrious woman is always with us. There will always be plenty of people blessed with the faculty of catching dictionary words by the wrong end. An interesting phase of this form of genius is the havoc made with proper names. For instance, I heard a young man say the other evening, after returning from the theatre, that "Hamlet" wasn't half as good a play as "Paul Kulver." "Kauvar!" somebody suggested. The first speaker was indignant. He knew what he was talking about. Paul Kulver was one of the leaders during a rebellion in France. No! he wasn't any relative to the juror, so far as the speaker knew. The revolution was too long ago for that. How long? Well, he supposed from the dress the people wore on the stage that it must have been thousands of years. Wooden shoes couldn't have been worn within a thousand years. But it was an awful fine play. The cool way that Paul marched up to the "gelatine" to have his head cut off, and "I never seen a speaker except Luther Lafin Mills or Bob Ingersoll that could talk like him." It was curious to think that this young man had been taught in the public schools and must have read some American history without ever for one moment having been led to consider that the French revolution had been in any way connected with that in America. It is surprising that the three-cornered hat worn by Lafayette and Washington didn't indicate some slight relationship in time to the figures in Steele Mackaye's drama. But the devious ways of human intellect are inscrutable.—*Evening Journal*.

#### The Study Table.

##### RECENT SCHOOL BOOKS.

To prepare a series of school readers for the public schools of America, ought to be regarded as a serious task; and the publisher who puts forth a new series assumes a solemn responsibility. In the new methods of our city schools, with their highly elaborated gradations, the school reader does not occupy as important a relation to the mental development of the child as in years gone by, but in the country schools and the isolated homes the "Reader" is still the living fountain, from which thousands of children draw their first literary inspirations and cultivate their earliest tastes for the printed page. Such a responsibility, the Harper Brothers have assumed in sending forth a new series of Readers, following the conventional cycle from first to fifth. The first thing noticeable is, of course, the admirable workmanship and the advance made in the book-making art, the admirable canvass covers of the first four in the series, the clear type, good paper and artistic illustrations. The next question is as to the matter. We leave to the "agents" the task of proving that the matter is the best ever offered and that these Readers should forthwith supercede all the other Readers in the market, but we certainly can say that the matter interests us much, and that the two highest numbers particularly commend themselves to the library, as well as the school-room. But the choppy character of the selections and the slovenly way in which the extracts are sometimes detached from their settings as well as from their authors are to be regretted. It is well to give bright bits of composition from the standard writings of great authors, which in and of themselves are worthy of study, but if due credit is made, so that the child realizes that there is much more where that came from, and he is tempted by the extracts to complete the story, or to read the entire book of the author, whatever it may be, an additional point of much value is made. To illustrate: On page 410 of the Fifth Reader there is an interesting reading lesson from Francis Parkman, entitled: "The Heights of

Abraham," and we turn to the notes which are wisely gathered out of the way in the back part of the volume, but we find no hint there of the source from which the extract is taken. And the bright boy who is interested in this lesson is not tempted farther. The same is true of the delightful story of "The Mouse," from W. D. Howells, on page 433 of the same Reader. For a similar reason we regret so many anonymous pieces, many of which must be left so from sheer carelessness. For instance: Jean Ingelow's song of "Seven Times One" is printed in the Fourth Reader without any credit, while "Seven Times Two," on another page, is duly credited. Mr. Gannett's "The Halo" is printed without any credit under another title, viz: "The Slaughter of the Birds." The prose introduction starts off in this stately manner: "Not many years ago a strange and cruel fashion prevailed, even in some of the most civilized countries, etc." Alas! from present indications we fear that the Harpers' Reader Series will not outlive the atrocious fashion so as to justify the complacent past tense.

We are not sure that patriotism is best cultivated by excluding from the Fifth Reader all but "American authors." Our own experience in the school-room would prove that children, like men and women, are more in danger of partisanship and national conceit than they are of cherishing a too great hospitality towards those not of them, or of too modest an estimate of their own and their country's excellence. No youth is in the way of becoming a true citizen of the United States who is not first a good citizen of the world.

Much might be said in commendation of the catholicity, the model heathfulness and spiritual frankness of these selections. The truths of morals and religion are not ignored here in order to arouse no partisan prejudices, or to avoid trenching upon the liberty of conscience. But these are frankly recognized as legitimate elements in literature, the selections being made in a broad universal spirit that no sect or schism can make protest. These books indicate the direction in which peace is to be found concerning the vexed question of religion in the public schools. It is to come not by excluding every form of religious thought, but by being hospitable to all forms of religion thought. When our school books and school teachers feel free to recognize whatever is available and noble in literature, ranging from Cardinal Newman to Robert Ingersoll, from the Koran, the Psalms or the Vedas, the high precepts of Confucius, Socrates and Jesus, then they can go on with their prime work, that of making men and women; and the public schools will become spiritual gymnasiums for the development of character. These books do not quite reach this ideal. We have not recognized the name of any great Catholic writer among the selections of the two highest readers. O. A. Brownson, whose estimate of Daniel Webster is given, can scarcely be claimed as such. We hope that among other improvements, subsequent editions of the two higher books at least will contain an alphabetical index of the selections at the close. School children cannot too early learn the value of such helps—and to us older folks they would be very convenient.

*Manual of Empirical Psychology as an Inductive Science.* A Text-Book for High Schools and Colleges, by Dr. Gustav Adolf Lindner, Professor in the University of Prague. Authorized translation by Prof. Charles De Garmo, of Normal, Ill. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co.

This treatise, originally written in 1858, was given its last revision by the author in 1885. It is one of the few school text-books which a person who is neither a teacher nor a pupil will find it both interesting and profitable to read by course.

One of the suggestive features of Prof. Lindner's psychology is the fact that, while he adheres to the three-fold treatment of his subject under the heads

of concepts, feelings and volitions, these uniformly appear as three phases, not three divisions, of the mind. The tendency of modern research in mental problems is quite clearly towards a more emphatic recognition of the soul as one and indivisible. Is there not in this a fresh hint of its probable permanence? Being uncomposed it cannot be dissolved.

I do not remember to have seen a happier statement of determinism in its bearing upon effort for the improvement of humanity. "The idea of transcendental freedom is nonsense. For as soon as this is admitted, the moral order of the world loses its immovable basis, every systematic influence upon man, therefore all education, is foolishness, for it can produce no effect upon volition, and therefore none upon morality. The deeds of history are but throws upon the dice board, for the volition which called them forth arose by chance, and might just as well have been otherwise." Determinism, the doctrine that all conduct is determined by motives, instead of any, it being arbitrarily self-determined, by a lawless will, leads, when properly understood and applied, not to a fatalistic paralysis of effort, but to its reassurance and encouragement. Select the right motive, bring it to bear on society, and the desired fruit can be confidently expected.

It is to be regretted that the book is not provided with a copious index, though this trite protest of the reviewer is so frequently allowed to pass unheeded that it may hardly be worth while to repeat it.

H. D. M.

ROBERTS BROTHERS have issued a complete edition of Sir Edwin Arnold's poems in two large volumes. *The Literary World* says these volumes demonstrate the author's industry and fluency, expressing the opinion however that a small portion only of his work will live permanently, the greater part being for "the day and generation only."

THE first number of *The Home, School and Nation* has been issued and presents a very attractive table of contents. An excellent half-tone engraving of Benjamin Franklin forms the frontispiece, Dr. H. W. Thomas contributing an interesting sketch of the same.

ANNOUNCEMENT is made of a new illustrated edition of Darwin's "Voyage Round the World," by the Appletons.

REV. CHARLES H. SPURGEON is said to be the author of thirty-five volumes of sermons.

#### The Newest Books.

All books sent to *UNITY* for review will be promptly acknowledged under this heading, and all that seem to be of special interest to the readers of *UNITY* will receive further notice. Any book in print will be mailed on receipt of price, by the publishers of *UNITY* CHARLES H. KERR & CO., 175 Dearborn St., Chicago.

**The North Shore Watch and other Poems.** By George Edward Woodbury. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Cloth, 16mo., pp. 122. \$1.25.

**Dr. Muhlenberg.** By William Wilberforce Newton, D. D. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin Co. Cloth, 16mo., pp. 272. \$1.25.

**Stories of New France.** In Two Series—First Series by Agnes Maule Machor. Second Series by Thomas G. Marques. Boston: D. Lothrop Co. 16mo., pp. 313.

**The Power of Thought in the Production and Cure of Disease.** By W. H. Holcombe, M. D. Chicago: Purdy Pub. Co. Paper; pp. 21. 15 cents.

**The Public School Music Course.** By Charles E. Whiting. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. Six Vols. Boards.

**John W. Chadwick and M. J. Savage on EVOLUTION.**

BY MR. SAVAGE: The Effects of Evolution on the Coming Civilization. Pamphlet, 30 pages, 10 cents.

BY MR. CHADWICK: Evolution as Related to Religious Thought. Pamphlet, 28 pages, 10 cents. Charles Robert Darwin; his Life, Works and Influence. Pamphlet, 36 pages, 10 cents.

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## Church Door Pulpit.

## CONCERNING PRAYER.

Reprinted from "Unity Mission No. 4."

## SHALL WE PRAY?

BY J. T. SUNDERLAND.

I have just received a letter of a kind that I suppose most Unitarian ministers (and perhaps other ministers) receive many of. It is from a gentleman of much intelligence and independence of thought, expressing his disapproval of prayer, and his surprise that I, with my idea of God as a Being who conducts the on-goings of the world in orderly ways, can do anything so plainly unreasonable as to pray. Since this question, whether or not persons who believe in law and order in the universe may consistently pray, troubles many earnest minds, I send you a few lines from the letter mentioned, with my answer (such as it is) to the same. Very likely what I have written will not help any one, and yet possibly it may. I should, perhaps, say further, by way of explanation, that the letter received was called out by its author's reading a sermon of mine on "the Higher Conception of God."

"Believing, as you do, in that higher and rational conception of God set forth in your discourse, and entertained, I suppose, by most modern Unitarians, may I ask how you can believe in prayer? Is it not immoral to pray to an all wise and unchangeable being, whose plans are as determined and as unchangeable as gravity,—and not to be moved by the contradictory desires of mortals? For myself, as a believer in God, I should consider it useless, and a kind of insult to Deity. I really think that, in the future, prayers will be omitted from church services, and given up generally, as inconsistent with a belief in the order of the universe. I think the time is coming when the work of the minister will be to preach physics,"—etc., etc.

I felt that I ought to reply to the letter. What I said was in substance as follows:

As I look at it, the higher and more rational conception of God which is coming into many minds, and which Unitarianism is trying as well as it can to stand for, instead of making prayer less reasonable, makes it more reasonable and beautiful. Only we need to have the higher and more rational conception of *prayer* as well as of *God*. When you write what you do, are you not thinking of prayer under the old *low* and *poor* conception of begging and importuning God to change his mind for our sake, and do for us what he does not want to do, and would not do but for our begging? But this comes no nearer what I (and, I suppose, Unitarians generally) mean by prayer, than does the old idea of God, as an arbitrary ruler on a heavenly throne, to what we mean by God. Prayer means to me the following five things (it means more, but it means these), to-wit:

1. Reverence (or worship), of a Being worthy of reverence and worship.
2. Thankfulness or gratitude, to the great source of all life, light, love and blessing.
3. Love, to One whom I believe to be worthy of my highest love.
4. Confidence and trust, in Him whom I believe to be the Infinite Power, Wisdom and Goodness over me and over the world.
5. Uplooking, yearning, aspiration, after higher attainments in character and life; the soul's upreaching towards that perfection which it sees symbolized in God.

Surely all this must commend itself as rational and good to every thoughtful, earnest believer in God. Does it not so seem to you? If so, then you see we have a large and very noble field open for prayer, entirely *aside* from *petition* or *asking for things*, at all. And if we should analyze the prayers of Unitarian ministers generally, or thoughtful men and women, not ministers, holding Unitarian views, I suppose we should find that, as a matter of fact, by far the larger part of the utterances of which these prayers are made up, fall under one or another of these heads,—expressions of *reverence, gratitude, love, trust or aspiration*.

I think it is only when we come to the small part of prayer which consists in *petition*, or *asking for things*, that you and I would not agree. And even here I am rather disposed to think we should agree, if we really understood each other.

I hope you do not think that I ever ask for things in my prayers, desiring to put my poor wisdom (or folly) in the place of the Higher wisdom; or wishing God to do what I ask, *unless it is best*. On the contrary, if I thought my prayers could have such an effect, I should never dare to pray again. Every true prayer couples with its every petition an expressed or implied "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." It only asks that such or such things may be, *if they are best* in the sight of the *Higher Wisdom*.

But you say, if you want only those things to take place which are wise and best, why pray at all? For will God not do what is wisest and best anyhow, even without your asking? To this I answer:

1. I, as a human parent, always try to do what is wisest and best for my little children, whether they ask for it or not; but, all the same, I am glad to have them come and *tell me their wants*. It gives them pleasure to do it; it draws them nearer to me in confidence and trust and love, to do it; and it gives me real happiness to have them do it. Now I believe it is exactly so, only more so still, between us poor, weak, short-sighted, erring men and women, and our wise, kind, loving Heavenly Father. I believe that for us to go to him in the spirit of loving, trusting children, and tell him our sorrows and wants, cannot but be well pleasing to him, as I am sure it is also very cheering, strengthening and helpful to us. And if so, then surely this part of prayer also must be thoroughly rational.

2. Then again, I think there are some blessings which, in the very nature of the case, God can not give to us, or, in other words, which can not be received by us from God, no matter how willing he may be to grant them, until we put ourselves in a mental attitude or condition to receive them. And prayer, the opening of our hearts, the uplifting of our desires to God, puts us in such a mental condition. Just as, in the morning of a bright day, the sun may shine outside ever so brightly, but if we do not open our window blinds it cannot shine into our rooms, so we must open our minds and hearts, so to speak, by earnest thought, and aspiration, and up-looking desire, to God, or else we are not in a condition to receive any highest gifts and blessings of God's spirit, love and peace.

This is the way it seems to me. And now, as you look at it further, and thoughtfully, and from this standpoint, does it not seem to you so, too? If I am right in this, then you see prayer (according to this *higher conception* of prayer) is in *every* aspect entirely rational, as well as something very sweet, uplifting and helpful.

I join with you in hearty appreciation of physics and all science. I feel sure that in the future men are going to believe in and study science and Nature a great deal more than they have done in the past. And I have no doubt that the old idea of prayer, as a begging of God to set aside wise laws to accommodate puny and often foolish men, will more and more fade away as men grow wiser. But I think that all this will only prepare the way for *true* prayer,—that prayer which seeks to get the highest spiritual good by conforming to the highest spiritual laws of our nature. This kind of prayer, I think, we shall no more outgrow than we shall outgrow hope, or love, or gratitude, or aspiration, or reverence, or the sense of dependence on a Higher Power, or the need, in our weakness and sorrow, of comfort and strength from some source higher than our poor selves.

Instead of universal law cutting us off from access to God and communication with him, it seems to me it brings us into a hundred times closer relation

to him. It fills the whole universe with him—with his presence, his power, his wisdom, and his goodness. For what is law? Only one form of the manifestation of God—a God who is too great, and wise, and beneficent to be arbitrary or fickle, or deal with the world otherwise than in an orderly way, which intelligent creatures like man can find out, and depend upon and trust.

Thus, I think, as we get away from the old, lower views, and come to understand the higher conception of prayer which corresponds with the higher conception of God, it becomes clear that religion has nothing about it that is more perfectly rational, and certainly nothing about it that is more uplifting, and in the profoundest way helpful, to weak, erring, and sorrow-laden human beings than prayer,—the communion of the earthly child with the heavenly parent,—the carrying of our little cups of heart-need and spirit-need to the great Fountain to get them filled,—the reaching up, when we are weak or sad, and laying hold of the Infinite Source of strength and joy, which is forever above us.

## WHAT DOES PRAYER DO FOR US.

BY C. F. DOLE.

... We have thus ruled out as irreligious the idea of prayer as a shorter way to get what God has made to depend upon work, thought, and natural means, or as a method of supplementing inferior character or narrower intelligence. We have ruled out as irreligious the idea of prayer as constituting a difference in God's favor between men otherwise equally just, true, energetic and worthy. We have ruled out the idea as irreligious, that the words and forms of prayer affect and influence God. Let us see now what purely rational elements in prayer we have left.

[Beginning at the lowest and most common element in prayer, it is spoken of, first, as the natural utterance of our want; next, as the utterance of our reverence; of our aspiration; of our unselfishness. And, as probably its highest function, it involves adjustment of one's self to the facts of Nature and one's lot; "it is as though a man were a single instrument in a great orchestra, and prayer is the getting into tune."]

We have risen now to an ideal of prayer which is sufficiently worthy, and also indisputably rational. In prayer, you enter into the wholesome mood of reverence, a mood true to the facts of your life; you aspire after the best examples of noble living; you take the whole brotherhood of man into your enlarged sympathies; you adjust your will into the nicest harmony with the facts, the requirements and the laws of life; and in this ideal mood, combined of peace, unselfishness, aspiration, and reverent feeling, you lay out before you and consider all the desires of your heart. You distinguish between real wants and false; the real wants grow stronger, and you see with new clearness what to do. It is not Nirvana into which you have entered, in which consciousness is quenched and desires cease; but you have thrown yourself into complete connection with the heart-throb of the universe; you are stirred with its life; you are desiring with its great desires; you are working out its work, and move with its rhythmical movement. . . .

I want you to see that the idea of prayer which we have reached is something more than the reflex action of the mind on itself, as though a man were lifting himself in a basket. But there is something real, outside of one's self, in which the thoughts of prayer find their natural reaction. It is at every point the sense of a grandeur and power outside one's self, of ideals above one's self, of sympathies touching the whole world, of work to be accomplished, and far-reaching purposes, through which we are moved to pray. It is the motion of our spirits to go out into actual relations beyond and above themselves. A faith, very simple indeed, but real, underlies our prayer, that there is something by which, if we can

bring ourselves into connection with it, life will be fuller, more harmonious. So much of faith is implied in science, which supposes a ground of some sort of intelligible reality in its studies. So much of faith is implied in all schemes of philanthropy, in which the individual thinker and worker believes himself to be working out universal laws of progress, who would despair, if he did not think that the spirit of the universe worked toward progress, and that he was on the winning side. So in all the highest movements of feeling, man goes out of himself in sublime quest of something grander to which his life belongs.

We are prepared now to go further, and say that prayer accomplishes something. The attitude which it involves is the attitude of the greatest success. It is the attitude in which all friction of obstacle outside or anxiety within is reduced to its minimum, and all things work together to help you. It is the attitude of seriousness, earnestness, and sensitiveness, in which one's best promptings and clearest thoughts come. The fact is, you are using in prayer a series of powerful natural means. The intent and eager fixing of the mind upon a thing, as we have already seen, is one of the sequences which are made to lead to the realization of that particular thing. It is undoubtedly the common element in all the curious stories of faith-cures. We have never found out how far, by some species of subtle telegraphy, by some pull which mind has on mind, this intendment of will, required by prayer, may reach. . . .

I said that it would be prayer if we did not say, "God"; if we simply let out our highest feelings, thoughts and endeavors; if we only said, "We want health and life and goodness," and did not say, "Give Thou these things;" and if we simply came into harmony with the moral order of the universe. I said that this would be rational and useful. But these impressive moral facts which we have stated do not leave us content to stop and say, Nature, but draw us on to say, Thought; do not leave us content to say the Universe, but draw us on to say Spirit; do not leave us content with the abstraction of a Moral Order, but draw us on to conceive of a Life into fellowship with which we come. For what is an eternal moral order, except as it presupposes an eternal life? or what is an infinite universe, except as a revelation of infinite thought? Use words we must. The word "God," besides being dear by use, sums up our thought that the ultimate fact or power into whose unity everything is bound up is alive, is intelligible, is righteous, and loves. True, all these words are make-shifts. How could they be anything else? But Reason not only does not forbid them, but calls them out of our whole vocabulary, and assures us that we have come short, at the best, of comprehending Him 'who is all.'

Suppose now, under that idea of prayer, as the utterance of our desires and aspirations, and the loftiest mood of reverence, sympathy and peace, we frankly recognize what that idea seems always to have contained and suggested,—the thought of the presence of the infinite life of God; that, as we look out on the mystery of being, we see it throbbing with his life; as we enter into the moral order, that we are conscious of the divine fellowship; admit that our desires are his inspiration; as we express and work out every honest and healthy desire, let us think of ourselves both as drawing upon his resources and as co-workers with him; suppose that our best intentions are recognized as the attuning of our wills into harmony with the infinite will. Suppose thus that prayer is conceived as the thinking, willing, feeling, working, being, in unison with the Life of which we partake. . . .

This brings me to say that we pray on the authority of our own experiences. Reason puts down the barriers. Reason says, Pray, if you feel inclined; and, then, feeling comes surging up to



utter itself. All sorts of life experiences are only half complete, unless they go out into prayer. Our troubles and disappointments, the great sacraments, as they have been called, of marriage, birth and death, our delight in nature and music, the impulses of popular and patriotic feeling sweeping over us, the stories of heroism, the sudden dangers which bring us up with a start,—all such experiences move us to prayer, and are never so rich as when they most completely merge themselves in the purifying spirit of prayer. Then, our burdens seem shared, man's toil and pain seem interpreted, and indefinite access of vigor, courage, and thought seems to flow in, as though indeed God were speaking to his children, and actual connection were made between our finite spirits and the universal life. Prayer thus seems, at least in those moments when we must truly pray, like the sweetest symphony to soothe and to inspire.

This is not all. However much prayer did for us, if, when we had prayed, it left our reason obscured or made us less loyal to truth, however precious it was, we should hold ourselves bound to give it up. On the contrary, in the attitude of prayer, we see truths, facts and relations with clearer than usual sight, and we never love truth so much or are nearer being ready to die for it; while as for all virtuous, courageous and efficient action, as we have already seen, the mood of prayer is that in which we should like always to live.

Finally, I do not see how anything which can be said about prayer should be overwhelmingly convincing, except as one's prepossessions are directed, at least, toward the moral interpretation of life. The whole argument of religion has been lifted above the old level of outward and miraculous evidences, and rests upon what we think the impregnable basis of the moral facts, the moral history, and the moral nature of man. But it is idle to talk to men about a moral order in the universe, who acknowledge no such moral order within. Let us, then, who love to pray, and want our children to pray, while teaching them the simple forms of words underneath which the habit and spirit of actual prayer are developed, be even more patient to train them in stanch and truthful habits of character. For, if they once love honest character above everything else, their own life experience may be trusted to lead them up from the prattling of childhood, with its "Now I lay me down to sleep," to the most exalted form of devotion and Jesus' sublime thought, "Thy will be done."

#### HOW PRAY? BY W. C. GANNETT.

A prayer is like one of those trailing vines that flower up out of the earth in a foot or two of leaves and blossoms, and then hasten to hide themselves again in the ground and get a fresh root for a new growth. A prayer is but a few words of aspiration thus blossoming out between the roots of resolve or feeling; the intensest act almost that one can do a true prayer is, and yet an utterly natural act, your nature at its best. An act, I say, yet rather a surprise, a self-forgetting, when it passes into words. Nothing so hard; nothing so easy. Spontaneous, if the conditions are fulfilled; impossible, when not.

How pray? In the simplest, child-like, thinking yet unthinking, way. Prayer has not the same utterance for all ages, nor for all temperaments. Some mothers kiss their children often, some but seldom; with some persons what is within leaps to the outside through tone, word, look, gesture; with others never through gesture, little through look, hardly through word, but deeply, steadily through silent deeds and motherliness. These latter are unfortunate: a nature quick and healthy and well rounded, with all its powers in play, shows itself easily, spontaneously, by many outlets. But let us be

ourselves in this matter, not afraid of ourselves. Not afraid to let our feelings out,—and is not that fear the whole reason why many do not pray? And, on the other hand, let us not try to bring them out in any forced, unnatural, *other-person's* way.

How begin to pray? Start from the last thought, the last sight, the last feeling, just as it lies there in you, and from that look up, look in, and speak, or think till thought breaks into speech of itself. What name to use? Any name that seems truest at the moment—Father, Mother, Friend, Thou Good One, O Heart of All, Thou dear and holy Nature. In what form is God standing most visible to your feeling? That is his true name for you at the moment. And what to say? Why, "Thank you, Father," if that is the feeling. "I trust you, Father," if that is the feeling. "I am ashamed before you, Father,"—"I long to feel thee nearer, and with a clearer and more constant sense to see thee in every little thing, and work with thee in every little deed,"—if these are the feelings.

And when to stop our prayer? Let the feeling tell you when. Stop when it stops. Stop gradually, perhaps, as feelings do. Does Amen finish feeling, thinking? But do not try to drag on your thought. Remember that the God within, that Inner Self, is on good terms with your sincerity. There may be long prayers without one word of praying,—the real touch. Sometimes one word, one minute from the depths,—that is the whole heart of your prayer; the rest might have been spared, unless indeed you could not have come to that heart of it save through this rest of it. Sometimes the words may sing themselves with repeats, as if to inward music. And sometimes, especially as one grows older,—the words will die away almost to silence. "You young ones," said an old negro auntie, "you young ones make too much noise with your Glory and your Hallelu! When you've got the real grace, the real glory, you will feel so quiet and peace-like,—just as if you were in the stable at Bethlehem, and the mother had given you the sleeping babe to hold!" Perhaps the words will hardly rise at all above a happy, living silence, in which you find yourself adrift. It is possible to be so prayer-full you cannot, would not, speak. And then, perhaps, in place of words your own, some brave verse will come chanting through your mind, or some quiet hymn, like this from Coleridge, will glide in to be a prelude to your rest:

"Ere on my bed my limbs I lay,  
It hath not been my use to pray  
With moving lips or bended knees;  
But silently, by slow degrees,  
My spirit I to Love compose;  
In perfect Trust mine eyelids close,  
And reverential resignation,  
No wish conceived, no thought expressed!  
Only a sense of supplication  
A sense o'er all my soul impressed,  
That I am weak, yet not unblest;  
Since in me, round me, everywhere,  
Eternal Strength and Wisdom are."

How good it is to pass from that happy, *conscious* trust into the happy unconscious trust of Sleep and the Night!

And how good it is in the fresh morning light, before fresh duties, pleasures, trials of the day, to bathe's one's self again in conscious consecration before we go out into the quick, active hours!

And how good to feel doors open now and then, right in some simple duty of the day, at which we can stand for one moment, look out, and see the fresh and friendly God all around, and then go back with a new heart to work! This is prayer.

And how good, in days of trial, weakness, sorrow, to feel our way along some foot-path of old words to the hills of peace and strength; or to foreknow, amid a darkened week, that next Sunday's hymn and the friend's prayer after it, however wide his sermon stray will be sure to bring a moment in the sun-light!

And now, should our feeling run naturally into the mould of asking, nothing can make it wrong to let it

take that way, although most certainly it is not logical. But we are not at logic. We do not mean it for deliberate petition, for we are not deliberating. Almost inevitably it sometimes will so run: "Father, forgive me, help me, guide me!" we say. And with many no other way will ever be so natural. But with others, as their new thought of God more and more shape, their feeling of his presence and relationship to them, the petition-form even for spiritual blessings will simply and gradually and naturally fall from their prayer, as bud-scales drop when leaves and blossoms come; and the blossom will be simple words of trust and praise and thankfulness and shame and longing and communion.

But who can tell another what to pray? Who can pray *with* others even, save as, in sympathy, he feels that he himself is those others and his one thought interprets many hearts? Only so is public prayer a natural self-expression; but so it is most natural. The minister never goes out from himself, or never should, but he tries to take all his friends into himself. He is those young men sitting there with their life-dreams and temptations; is those maidens sitting there in theirs; is those mothers thinking of their children, and those fathers thinking still of business and knowing very well whether that business has been honorable or dishonorable this past week; and so it is not for them, but for *himself in them, them in himself*, that he offers prayer. And thus what perhaps seems, until tried, formal and unnatural, is as natural as any other piece of self-forgetting; yes, and is joy, like any self-forgetting. The only trial about it is that so much self-confession is immodesty; and that sometimes is felt as trial.

Pardon one word more. Say, or think, "grace" in your home! But if not, ask not your minister, when he comes, to say it for you: there is more of etiquette than reverence in that, and such etiquette is irreverence. Even if you do say grace, still be slow to ask him to; keep that privilege withheld till he is very dear to you. The thanksgiving, so beautiful when said by father, mother, children, at the moment when all come together and the home is most the home,—the word which, so said, or which unsaid in the Quaker's reverent way of silence, turns the common dinner into a household sacrament,—that word loses part of the beauty of its meaning when you lightly ask another to say it for you. It is a *household* sacrament. The beauty of it is that you minister it in your home, I in mine. And the stranger's privilege is sufficient that he is permitted to be present at it. As a stranger, I should as soon expect to kiss your children good-night for you as to say grace for you. But it is good sometimes, when they are dear, to kiss those children *with* you.

"Allah, Allah!" cried the sick man, racked with pain the long night through;  
Till with prayer his heart was tender, till his lips like honey grew.

But at morning came the Tempter; said, "Call louder, child of pain!  
See if Allah ever hear or answer, 'Here am I,' again."

Like a stab the cruel cavil through his brain and pulses went;  
To his heart an icy coldness, to his brain a darkness, sent.

Then before him stands Elias; says, "My child! why thus dismayed?  
Dost repent thy former fervor? Is thy soul of prayer afraid?"

"Ah!" he cried, "I've called so often; never heard the 'Here am I';  
And I thought, God will not pity, will not turn on me his eye."

Then the grave Elias answered, "God said, 'Rise, Elias, go—  
Speak to him, the sorely tempted; lift him from his gulf of woe."

"Tell him that his very longing is itself an answering cry;  
That his prayer, 'Come, gracious Allah!' is my answer, 'Here am I.'"

Every inmost aspiration is God's angel undeified;

And in every "O my Father!" slumbers deep a "Here, my child!"

From Tholuck, by James Freeman Clarke.

Lord, what a change within us one short hour

Spent in thy presence will avail to make!  
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,  
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!

We kneel, and all, the distant and the near,  
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear.

We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!

Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,

Or others,—that we are not always strong,  
That we are ever overborne with care,  
That we should ever weak or heartless be,  
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,  
And joy and strength and courage is with thee?

R. L. Trench.

No words of labored prayer I know,—  
I cannot seek my Father so;  
It gushes up in sudden hours,  
As sing the birds, as bloom the flowers.

And is it prayer? or is it praise?  
I only know, in loving ways,  
When joy and sorrow touch the springs,  
To thee my spirit inly sings.

Away from forms I needs must turn;  
No prayer have I that I must learn:  
I ask but help to love thee more,  
And thy dear will in peace adore.

Mrs. L. J. Hall.

I pray not, then, because I would,—  
I pray because I must;  
There is no meaning in my prayer  
But thankfulness and trust.  
And thou wilt hear the thought I mean,  
And not the words I say;  
Wilt hear the thanks among the words  
That only seem to pray.

I would not have thee otherwise  
Than what thou still must be;  
Yea, thou art God, and what thou art  
Is ever best for me.  
And so, for all my sighs, my heart  
Doth sing itself to rest,  
O Love Divine, most far and near,  
Upon thy faithful breast.

John W. Chadwick.

**Liberty and Life.**—By E. P. Powell, author of "Our Heredity from God." Contents: Life and Death, what they are; Sin a Crime Against Life; Righteousness Obedience to Law; Sinning Against the Holy Spirit; A Sound Mind in a Sound Body; Is the Average Life Worth the Living? The True, the Beautiful and the Good; Not Allopathy nor Homeopathy, but Sympathy; The True Life; The Doing Creed; The Keys; A Bundle of Paradoxes; A Substitute for Orthodoxy; The Two Theologies; Natural Moral Compensation; Character; The Religion of the Future; New Year's in 1982 Cloth, 12mo, pp. 208, 75 cents.

Remarkable for its boldness of thought and its terse, vigorous sentences. The author is not orthodox in his creed, but his words breathe reverence for his conception of God, for humanity and for the teachings of Jesus. Especially strong is his argument that the wilful wasting of life is sin, and his graphic and poetic portrayal of the constant expenditure of life through which men live by being able to die. Each thought and word and action, he says, costs life, and men live grandly as they are able to die grandly and rapidly. The book shows evidences of research and study and is interesting throughout.—*Newark Evening News.*

**Freedom and Fellowship in Religion.**—A volume of essays by D. A. Wasson, Samuel Longfellow, Samuel Johnson, John Weiss, William J. Potter, Francis E. Abbot, O. B. Frothingham, John W. Chadwick, T. W. Higginson, Mrs. E. D. Cheney; with extracts from speeches on the platform of the Free Religious Association, by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Lucretia Mott, Robert Dale Owen, C. H. Malcom, Celia Burleigh, Wendell Phillips, Rabbi Wise, Dr. Bartol, Julia Ward Howe, F. B. Sanborn, Horace Seaver, A. B. Alcott, C. D. B. Mills, W. C. Gannett, Lucy Stone, and others. Cloth, 16mo., 424 pages, well printed on good paper and handsomely bound, retail price, \$1.50, our price to those who order direct from us, 75 cents.

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## Notes from the Field.

**Western Unitarian Conference.**—The Board of Directors of the Conference will meet at the Headquarters on Thursday, March 6, at 2 p. m. Attention is hereby called to the acknowledgments by the treasurer on the last page of UNITY, February 22, of amounts received on expenses for current year up to date. The friends of the Conference are earnestly requested to send in their contributions for year closing May 1, as early as practicable. Cannot the sums usually handed in on the first day of the annual session be sent to the treasurer beforehand? It will greatly oblige him and the Conference if this can be done. Thirty dollars have been received from Geneseo, Ill., since the last acknowledgment, which is an increase of 20 per cent. over the contribution of 1889 from that church. The need is upon us to rally to the support of the Conference with generous promptness. Will you help us to come up to our May Anniversaries with a clean balance sheet?

JOHN R. EFFINGER, Sec.

**Boston.**—Rev. Thos. R. Slicer, of Providence, conducts the next Normal Class in Channing Hall. Lesson on "Jesus' Doctrine of Prayers."—Rev. Joseph May, of Philadelphia, is to fill for one Sunday the pulpit of the late Rev. H. M. Foote, at King's Chapel.—The Register gives weekly notices of Unity Clubs and their work, and solicits information about such clubs; names of officers, methods of work and topics of study.—The Universalist Missionary to Japan, Rev. Geo. L. Perrin, late of Shawmut Avenue Church, left Boston last week on a tour through the west, to interest his denomination in his work. He will leave San Francisco March 22d for Japan, in company with two assistants, a gentleman and a lady.—In East Boston, last Sunday evening, there was held quite a well attended meeting of the Unitarian Temperance Society.—Last Monday evening the Sunday School Teachers' Union held its monthly meeting in Rev. E. A. Horton's church vestry. About one hundred and thirty delegates and guests attended. From five to six p. m. the usual social was held in the parlor, from six to seven, with a collation; the usual opening religious services and the essay by Rev. E. E. Hale, with remarks by Rev. Brooke Herford and others. It was said that young men and young women can usually be retained in the school if the superintendent or minister is able to secure for them one or more series of winter lessons by specialists, if he can interest them in discussion, or gather them into a club, combining spirited conversations on religious and secular subjects, and practical work for the Sunday School.—The Monday Club talked about a possible Unitarian Liturgy. A flexible, varied, spontaneous service seems to be desired, rather than a fixed book of service, prayers and collects. Responses of scripture verses are more frequent in our churches than formerly. Of thirty ministers present, eighteen read responsive psalms, eight read the A. U. A. services. Several of the latter explained that they read the services "flexibly."

**New Bedford, Mass.**—The Daily Mercury, of Feb. 15, publishes in full a sermon by Rev. W. J. Potter on "The Saving Power of Truth." The following sentences indicate the high quality of the sermon, and its timeliness:

The truth we want, the truth which is to be sought through "an ever heightening sky and an ever widening horizon," is the absolute and total reality of things in the universe, whether pertaining to the earth or the heavens, or to matter or thought or spirit, or to any other possibilities of life and existence. Truth, in this absolute sense, is synonymous with Infinite and Eternal Being. \* \* \* Better wait a whole century than help to enact a lie or even a half-truth, if the half-truth can only be obtained by a compromise against the other half. The proverb sometimes preached in such cases, that a half loaf is better than no bread, does not apply to any question where the point yielded is a point of morals. For then the half-loaf is not bread, but a stone; not food, but poison. \* \* \* The power in the world that makes for truth and righteousness is patient, but it wins at last. All history substantiates the truth that there is a power in the world—not simply above it or outside of it, but in it—that is reconciling the world unto itself; bringing it into harmony with its own ideal aims; shaping and fashioning it to the service of truth, goodness, and beauty. Let us call that power our God: God with us: God working in man, and through him, and for him.

"One God, one law, one element,  
And one far-off divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves."

**Chicago.**—The great Auditorium never lent its beauty and splendor to a nobler cause than when it opened its doors to the children of Chicago for the celebration of Washington's birthday. It was an occasion full of interest and significance to every true American heart. Noble addresses were made by several Chicago clergymen, none more profound in patriotic feeling or of greater moral inspiration than that of Bishop J. L. Spaulding, the Roman Catholic bishop of Peoria. One could but feel, in listening to him, that some of his sentences ought to be written in letters of gold and hung on the walls of every school-house and home. "What we want most of all is true men and women." "It is easy to die for one's country, but what is demanded of us to-day is that we live for it." "Ah, my children, we live by admiration, by hope, by love! To admire brute force,—that is barbarism! Learn to admire that which is truly noble and great! Love truth! Love

honor! Love righteousness! Then shall you become the noblest, wisest, gentlest men and women that ever breathed the air of Heaven." It was with such words as these that the good bishop thrilled the hearts of his hearers, and breathed on the children of Chicago his own exalted spirit.

**St. Louis, Mo.**—The St. Louis Unitarian Club make the following announcement for the remainder of the club year, terminating May 20th: Tuesday, Feb. 18th, "Church Architecture and Its Influence," Prof. Holmes Smith; Tuesday, March 18th, "Social Obligations of Church Membership," Mrs. Charles L. Moss; Tuesday, April 15th, "Theodore Parker," Thomas Dimmock; Tuesday, May 20th, "The St. Louis Unitarian Club," E. S. Rowse.

—A correspondent writes: Rabbi Sonnenschein spoke Sunday, Feb. 16th, in Temple Israel, on the question, "Shall Capital Punishment be Abolished?" He left the question as open when he concluded as when he began, and it was only by a remote inference that any conclusion could be drawn. Why is not capital punishment a fit and pertinent question for discussion in our pulpits and papers? When the horror of seven hangings is upon us we can agonize and appeal and protest and then drop the question till another horror threatens. Let us persist and press the question in the hope of ultimate abolishment of the horror and the barbarity of the life penalty.

**Plankinton, S. Dakota.**—We are permitted to make the following extract from a letter received by the Secretary of UNITY Publishing Committee, dated Plankinton, February 16th: "I like the idea of the Sunday Circle, and if I see an opportunity for doing anything in that line, shall be pleased to make the most of it; but am a little doubtful about it being practicable just at present. \* \* \* I read your letter to a young lady friend and she laughingly said: 'Why, we already have a Sunday Circle.' And sure enough we have, on a small scale, for she and I read UNITY together every Sunday afternoon, and enjoy it exceedingly. Who knows but that from that small beginning greater things may be accomplished?" Who knows? UNITY sends greeting to the Sunday Circle and believes that the promise to the two or three met together in the name of truth and righteousness, will be fulfilled to them.

**Hinsdale, Ill.**—The Unity Club of Hinsdale is spending the second half of its working year on "The Development of Republics," subdivided as follows: Feb. 11. Evolution of Government; W. H. Edwards. Extinct Republics; Mrs. C. C. Warren. Existing Republics; Joel Tiffany. Feb. 25. The Colonies at the Close of the French and Indian War; Miss Helen Gordon. Revolt of the Colonies; Mrs. I. G. Temple. March 11. The United Colonies; Mrs. Geo. Williams. The Revolution and its Effects; Miss Belle Tiffany. March 25. The Constitutional Convention; Miss L. R. Timmons. The Adoption of the Constitution; Jas. N. Robinson. April 8. Slavery; C. C. Warren. States Rights; H. A. Gardner. April 22. Revolt of the Slave States; Jas. V. Ridgway. Re-construction; Geo. H. Williams. May 6. Political, Social and Financial Condition of America to-day; W. G. Gordon. The Outlook; H. T. Root.

**Meadville, Pa.**—The Meadville Republican of February 15, reports a Browning Social in the Unitarian church. Joseph Shippen, after alluding to the funeral of Robert Browning at Westminster Abbey, on the last day of last year, gave an account of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's life, character and writings, which was followed by readings and recitations, and an account of Robert Browning's life and writings. Says the local paper: "The exercises, which held the close attention of a large and appreciative audience, were concluded by a reading of a few verses of one of Mr. Browning's very recent poems, 'Reverie,' presenting his abiding faith in immortality. In addition to the intellectual enjoyment of the evening, the social can scarcely fail to result in a wider and deeper study of these sublime poets."

**Richmond, Indiana.**—A comprehensive outline of Unitarian belief appears in the Richmond Telegram of February 14th, prefaced by the statement that "Unitarians have no dogmas, discipline, creed, or iron-clad rules to muzzle free thought and free speech; the door wide open for light, truth, progress and development, from any and all sources, have no infallible man or book, letting all things bear the test of reason." The writer is an interested layman, who announces that a series of liberal lectures to be given soon in Richmond, by Rev. Geo. A. Mayer and others; and also offers to distribute Unitarian literature to all who apply by letter, or in person, at his residence.

**Minneapolis, Minn.**—From the Minneapolis Journal, Feb. 18, we get the following: "Axel Lundberg gave a free lecture at Freya hall last Sunday forenoon on the subject, 'Some Thoughts About the Bible.' A good audience was present. Mr. Lundberg is an interesting lecturer and his audience enjoyed his argument. He will give another lecture next Sunday. The subject will be 'Is Unitarianism Freethinking and Atheism?' Mr. Lundberg wishes to form a Unitarian congregation in the city. From other sources we hear of the success of Mr. Lundberg's first lecture to his countrymen in Minneapolis, and of his ability and fitness for the work."

**Monroe, Wis.**—The secretary of the Western Conference spent Sunday, February 23, at Monroe, preaching in the Universalist church,

morning and evening. He found the Society enjoying a high degree of prosperity under the joint ministry of Mr. and Mrs. Sprague. The congregation and Sunday School show signs of increasing interest from week to week.

**New Hampshire.**—The Unitarian Educational Society has appointed Rev. Lyman Clark financial agent for Proctor Academy. It is proposed to increase the funds of the Academy. The Unitarian Grove Meeting Association will become incorporated, with power to issue stock and hold property.

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**Sunday:**—How many simple ways there are to bless.

**Monday:**—Not what we give, but what we share.

**Tuesday:**—Let labor meet delight half-way.

**Wednesday:**—God has plans man must not spoil.

**Thursday:**—Among dull hearts a prophet never grew.

**Friday:**—He who needeth love, to love hath right.

**Saturday:**—'Tis Heaven must come, not we must go.

—James Russell Lowell.

### A SCHOOL COMPOSITION.

"I am so tired just being good," said Ethel King, one day, when her composition had been handed back to her, marked careless, badly constructed.

"Why, what do you mean?" asked her older sister, who never troubled herself about wishing to be or do what she could neither be or do, and who was always happy.

"I mean just that. Everybody calls me a good little thing and says I try hard and then they sigh and look at me; they say right out loud when you go by; 'Isn't she lovely!' I know I'm not pretty and I can't be bright. Compositions are just horrid, and I won't try to be good any more." Ethel threw herself down on the sofa and pulled the cushion over her, and cried as if her heart would break.

"Let me see the composition," said Maggie. Ethel had grown quieter and was now opening and shutting her bag of books as fast as her fingers would let her. Maggie took it and read it slowly, but in spite of all her effort she could not avoid smiling. So she put her arms round her little sister, trying to soothe her, saying, "Be patient, dear, it isn't so very bad, only it is all mixed up, but you are such a good little thing that it will come out all right."

"There you are again; you are just as bad as all the rest. I am only a good little thing when I'd rather be horrid naughty and get a high mark for my composition."

"Nonsense, Ethel. Just see here. You began to write about Napoleon Bonaparte and you told where he was born and where he died, just as tombstones do, and then you said he had two wives at once and that he was a great soldier and that the English shut him up because they were afraid of him, and then you ended by saying it would have been a great deal better for the world if he had never been born. It is just like a conundrum and one wants to ask, 'why?' all the time. You don't give any reasons, so it is badly constructed."

"Oh, I know it is," sobbed Ethel again. "It is a great deal easier to be good than to write compositions."

"You have got to do both."

"I can't. I am going to give up trying to do anything."

Just then the big St. Bernard dog came into the room and thrust his head down into the cushions where again was Ethel's head. She held him tightly, saying:

"You dear, good Roger, you can't write compositions and everybody likes you. I wish I were a dog."

"No, you don't," said her sister.

"You must be brave and keep trying and think what you are saying or writing, just as much as being real good and doing the errands for us all the time. You know we could not get along without you one single day, just because you are the kindest, goodest little girl that ever was. You give the other girls your luncheon, and you let the boys have your bows and sashes, and you do everything for everybody, but you are dreadfully careless when you write compositions."

"I know I am. Don't you wish, Roger, you could be in my place and let me be a dog?"

"No, I don't," barked Roger.

"Roger is too brave to change," said Maggie.

Ethel started up, sat down again, pulled her dress straight and thought.

"I suppose there isn't any use in

wanting to be a dog or anybody. I've got to go on writing compositions all my life."

"And I suppose you would rather be called a good little thing than a horrid, mean girl."

"Why, yes, I suppose I had."

"Well, then, I would not make any fuss about the matter. I would not give up being a good little girl, and I would write over that composition and correct the sentences."

And Ethel did.

KATE GANNETT WELLS.

### SECOND THOUGHT.

I'm a pretty gold-finch,  
In a linden tree;  
And I like for company  
Birds of high degree.

Robins all around me;  
Rather vulgar birds,  
Fat and quite ungraceful—  
Common! Mark my words.

Woodpecker is near, too;  
But I've ever said,  
I could keep no company  
With such a fiery head.

Then that screaming blue-jay;—  
I've given many hints,  
That cultivated eyes could not  
Endure such flaring tints.

But,—I'm a little lonely,  
Among the linden trees;  
And if no high-bred birds appear,  
I may make friends with these.

The robin's song is sweet,  
The jay wears handsome clothes,  
The woodpecker himself  
Might cheer me up, who knows?

H. T. G.

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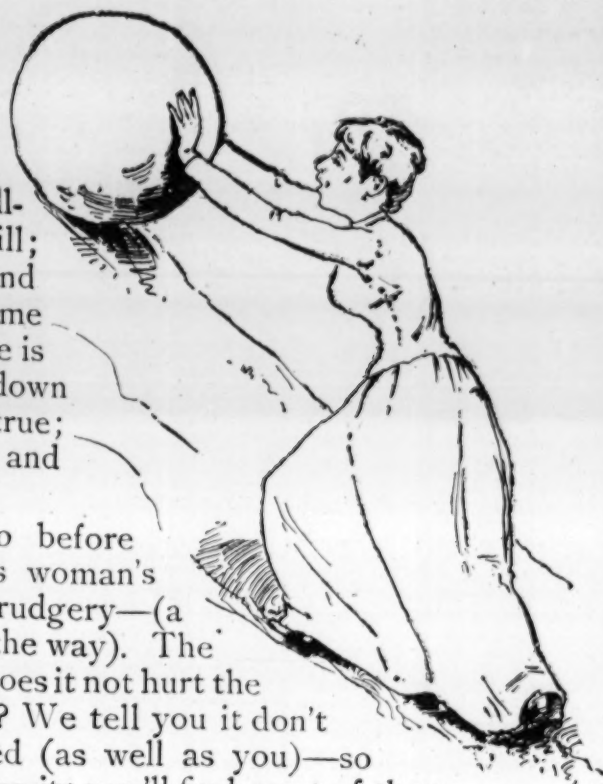
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The Chicago Unitarian Club will meet on March 5th, at 8 p. m., at the Unitarian Headquarters, 175 Dearborn St., Room 93 (take elevator to sixth floor). Paper by Rev. Mila F. Tupper, of La Porte, Indiana. Subject: "Ingersoll's Agnosticism vs. Modern Theism."

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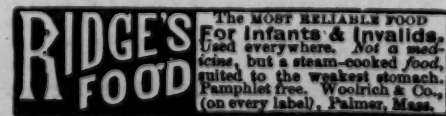
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